

USEPA AMCO Superfund Site & Lead Cleanup CAG Meeting, February 13, 2012

EPA Attendees: Rose Marie Caraway
Leana Rosetti
Steve Calanog
Lynn Suer

EPA Contractors: Kent Baugh/ITSI-Gilbane
Yash Nyznyk/CDM Smith
Carolyn Moore/CDM Smith
Jack Medina/ Translator
Maggie O'Donnell/ Lead Cleanup Contractor
Film Crew

CAG Members: John Schweizer (Technical Advisor)
Scott Oliver
Ellen Wyrick Parkinson
Frances Watson

Other Attendees: Dale Hagen/Alameda County

Purpose of Meeting

- *Update community on AMCO field work*
- *Update community on progress of lead cleanup, brainstorm/organize more community outreach, and discuss suggestions for improvement*
- *Technical Advisor to provide comments on AMCO investigations*

Welcome & Introductions

Leana Rosetti, EPA Community Involvement Coordinator (CIC) and EPA Co-Chair

- Ms. Rosetti welcomed everybody and reviewed the agenda. Ms. Rosetti noted that Brian Beveridge, Community Co-Chair, could not attend the meeting.

Lead Cleanup Progress Update

EPA RPM Steve Calanog and EPA CIC and CAG Co-Chair Leana Rosetti

- Mr. Calanog noted that EPA was going to videotape the CAG meeting and pointed out the production team that was present at the meeting. Mr. Calanog related that EPA headquarters is interested in the cleanup work and community interactions taking place in West Oakland. The CAG meeting was being videotaped because of EPA's interest in sharing the West Oakland project team's experience with other EPA project teams.
- Mr. Calanog updated the CAG on progress on the Lead Cleanup project.
 - 51 yards have been completed (remediated and restored).
 - It has been exciting to be out there during final walkthroughs.
 - By and large, the yards completed have gone exceedingly well.
 - Lessons have been learned and the process has been streamlined since starting in September 2011.
- Mr. Calanog noted that one of the project objectives is to hire locally and to that end many of the people doing the restoration work live in the neighborhood. Examples include Carlos Lopez, Manuel Sandejas, and Willie Doyle. It has been fun to be out there and see neighbors interact and work together on the cleanup.

- Mr. Calanog related that as of the date of the CAG meeting, the EPA has completed cleanup of 51 properties out of 150 potential properties. The EPA is continuing to knock on doors and send out information in an effort to have more residents sign up. About 35 more residents have signed up for cleanup in the spring and many more residents have verbally expressed interest or are in the process of completing the paperwork to be eligible to take part in the cleanup. Mr. Calanog asked that those present share information and their experiences with their neighbors. Mr. Calanog said that the EPA is present at the community center at 349 Mandela Parkway, Monday through Friday from 8 AM to 4:30 or 5 PM.
- Mr. Calanog described cleanup work on the public easement strips, adjacent to sidewalks in the neighborhood.
- Mr. Calanog also shared information about EPA's ongoing coordination with the Alameda County Lead Abatement Program that addresses lead-based house paint. The EPA is helping property owners determine if they qualify for the Lead Abatement Program. This is an opportunity for property owners to address peeling paint issues. If you have neighbors who have questions about lead-based paint issues, the EPA can connect you with Alameda County.
- Ms. Rosetti pointed out Dale Hagen, from the Alameda County Lead Abatement Program, was present at the CAG meeting. Ms. Rosetti explained that Mr. Hagen and his colleague, Mabel Smith, have been conducting outreach activities in the community. Mr. Hagen confirmed the outreach and indicated that Alameda County will conduct an onsite consultation for property owners and help them determine whether they are eligible for the program. Additionally, Mr. Hagen pointed out, Alameda County periodically provides lead safety training and an element of the Lead Abatement Program specifically addresses rental properties. The Lead Abatement Program is available for residences in Alameda, Oakland, Berkeley and Emeryville constructed prior to 1978.
- Ms. Rosetti asked if the soil would be tested as part of the consultation. Mr. Hagen replied that the consultation is strictly visual. A community member asked what residents who live outside of the participating cities could do. Mr. Hagen replied that residents outside of Alameda, Oakland, Berkeley and Emeryville should contact the housing and development offices that oversee their area. If a resident's home is in a city, he suggested that the homeowner contact the city offices; and if in an unincorporated area, the county offices should be contacted. All of the housing rehabilitation programs for low-income homeowners are supposed to address lead. These programs focus primarily on lead but also at times address structural problems.
- A community member asked about the income threshold for eligibility for the lead abatement program. Mr. Hagen replied 80% of the eligible properties have a median income of approximately \$46,500.

Additional Community Issues:

- Ms. Rosetti related that EPA has extended the Household Hazardous Waste Drop-off Program every Saturday, 8 AM to 4 PM, until the end of February. Mr. Calanog explained that the drop-off center will accept materials like paints, solvent and old fuel, and that the service is being provided as part of the Lead Cleanup project. Mr. Calanog pointed out that the hazardous waste drop-off is officially for the South Prescott neighborhood; however, if someone from outside of the South Prescott neighborhood brings in hazardous materials to the drop-off location, EPA will accept the materials.
- Ms. Rosetti introduced the CAG to a pilot program to communicate the results of environmental sampling and the risk posed to residents.
- Ms. Rosetti presented a new, graphical method of depicting results from the 2009 lead sampling of the South Prescott neighborhood yards. In the figure, yards are depicted in Green, Yellow, Orange and Red. Each color is associated with risk levels due to lead and specific actions.
 - Green (below 80 parts per million (ppm) lead) - Means that there are no restrictions on yard use.

- Yellow (between 80 and 500 ppm lead) - Means adding compost and other phosphate rich amendments to the soil is encouraged. Also, residents should minimize children's contact with bare, untreated soil, but gardening is safe.
- Orange (between 500 and 1500 ppm lead) - Means treatment, capping, or removal of soil is encouraged. Also, residents should minimize children's contact with bare, untreated soil and residents should limit planting of root crops and leafy greens.
- Red (above 1500 ppm lead) - Means that treatment and capping, or removal of soil is encouraged. Also, in addition to the precautions at the Orange and Yellow level, children should be restricted from or monitored while playing on exposed soil. Leafy greens and root crops should not be planted and all produce should be washed well.
- Ms. Rosetti explained that the intent of the figure is to plainly communicate what the various lead levels mean to residents and to identify impacts to daily life and activities.
- Ms. Rosetti requested feedback from the community on this presentation of the lead data.
- A community member responded that the figure appears helpful and requested that the files be sent out to the email list so they could look at them more closely.
- Rose Marie Caraway, EPA RPM for the AMCO Chemical Superfund Site, noted that something similar could be created for AMCO, possibly presenting data in a more color-coded, intuitive way. Ms. Caraway related that currently the data from the ongoing investigation is presented in tables. There are data from 125 sampling locations, each with samples from 12 different depths, which can be overwhelming. The four colors and attendant actions appear to be a much more direct format.
- A community member said that anything the EPA does to communicate more effectively is helpful. The same community member also asked whether this effort is intended for implementation at other sites. Ms. Rosetti confirmed that the presentation is for use at other sites and that the EPA is trying to get feedback from the West Oakland community so that other projects will be able to communicate data to residents more effectively. Ms. Rosetti indicated that she will send the figure and action list out to the community email list and will ask for feedback.
- Ms. Rosetti summarized other community relations issues, indicating that the cleanup is progressing well, but soon the EPA will hit a point where they need to know how many more properties are going to sign up so they can plan resources. Jessica Beehner from the hazardous waste collection drop-off has been knocking on doors and trying to raise awareness of the project. The EPA has had good participation from residents along Chester Street, but is still lacking participation from many of the residents on Peralta and closer to the West Oakland Bart Station.
- Ms. Rosetti told the CAG about the upcoming block party, which is tentatively planned for April 14th from 1 PM to 4 PM, and will take place on Chester Street between 3rd Street and 5th Street. The block party will be a good opportunity to get a sense of the remaining interest in the community. The idea is to have people on Chester Street open their cleaned yards to the community. Ms. Rosetti indicated that anyone in the community is welcome to help with organizing the block party.
- A community member indicated that she is willing to help on the block party, possibly with applying for permits. She indicated that she can help once the date has been confirmed. Ms. Rosetti indicated she will confirm the date with Kathy Webster (Chester St. resident) and get back to the CAG.
- Ms. Rosetti asked the CAG for ideas to get additional property owners to sign up for the lead cleanup. A community member asked if the problem is absentee landlords. Ms. Rosetti responded that the problem is actually getting in contact with the property owners. Property owners may not be reading mail or answering the phone or the door.
- Maggie O'Donnell, the EPA contractor for the lead cleanup, related that, so far, people who are living in the neighborhood have seen the work going on and have asked about it. Doing the work generates more work. She said that she thinks awareness-raising efforts are great but that the most effective awareness-raising tool is the team performing the work in each particular neighborhood. Once the team is in a neighborhood, block by block, people sign up.

She also noted that the team has reached a point where they are “in a groove” and of the 59 properties completed there has been no negative feedback.

- Ms. Rosetti pointed out that the EPA does want people to know that there will be an end to this project. The initial plan was to be in the area until Summer 2012, but if people don't sign up, the project might end early and some residents might miss the opportunity.
- A community member asked whether the community garden, City Slickers, had been or will be cleaned up through the Lead Cleanup program. Mr. Calanog responded that the responsible parties for the community garden have taken the needed steps to indicate their intent to be included in the lead cleanup program. The EPA is still working with the community garden organization to complete some further work at the area on 5th Street. Ms. O'Donnell confirmed that work on the 5th Street area is in their current plans.
- A community member commented about the level of preparation necessary prior to the EPA's activities on the lead cleanup. Ms. O'Donnell responded that the level of preparation is a moving target. Every property is different and the conditions at each property present a different starting point (i.e., different abilities on the part of the property owner, mobility issues, and access issues). The community member clarified that his concern is making sure that property owners know that for anything a property owner can't do in terms of preparation, help is available. It is important that no one fails to sign up because of the perceived difficulty of preparing their yard. Ms. O'Donnell replied that every property is different. As an example, some locations contain materials that have accumulated over a period of decades. The EPA's rule of thumb has been to give the homeowners a list of things that must be done and if the homeowner is not able to complete the defined activities, then EPA can assist in coming up with a contingency plan. Ms. O'Donnell related that to her knowledge nobody has declined participation in the lead cleanup because of an inability to perform the activities required for yard preparation. She said that Mr. Calanog has given the team latitude to deal with issues that might be a little out of scope, such as moving construction debris. In the end, it depends on the homeowner's ability to perform the preparation work. The project team has lent the homeowner the tools, and in some cases, the help they need to complete this prep work.
- Ms. O'Donnell indicated that if a homeowner has the intention of tearing up concrete they will need to do that before the cleanup team arrives. The cleanup focuses on exposed soil and EPA's responsibility does not include removing concrete or soil under concrete. The intention of the cleanup is to protect children's health.
- With regard to the questions about drainage, Ms. O'Donnell responded that every house has a drainage plan and the intent of the drainage plan is to ensure that yards are left with good drainage away from the home. So far, the drainage planning has been successful, with no pending issues.
- Ms. O'Donnell also addressed the issue of fences, explaining that some property owners want the project team to tear down fences they no longer want. It is the team's policy to replace fences if they are removed or destroyed in order to gain access to a yard, but to leave fences alone otherwise.
- Ms. O'Donnell added that in general the team has gone above and beyond what is required in the original scope. The original idea was to restore in kind but with permission from the EPA, the team has been able to restore yards with eco-friendly upgrades.

AMCO Superfund Site Update

Community Technical Adviser John Schweizer and EPA RPM Rosemarie Caraway

Mr. Schweizer presented the results of the recent geophysical testing at the AMCO Site to the CAG.

- Mr. Schweizer related that the tests were done in response to community and worker information regarding the potential for buried drums on the AMCO property. Two types of tests were conducted -- magnetometer and ground penetrating radar (GPR). Mr. Schweizer explained that GPR is radar that penetrates the subsurface and bounces back off of objects below the surface such as tanks or drums. The magnetometer is useful for locating subgrade piping and other metal objects. The magnetometer introduces a signal into the ground that

will travel along pipes and help the surface team locate them. A magnetometer works like a compass. If nothing is present in the subsurface the needle points north and south, if a metallic object is in the way, the needle will be deflected. Mr. Schweizer presented a map of the magnetic anomalies at the AMCO site. In the case of each deflection there can be an explanation for the deflection (e.g., known location of piping, or the presence of a large metallic body) or there is no explanation. The EPA further investigated unexplained anomalies with GPR. In some areas where there was no known cause for the anomaly, the GPR survey did identify scrap metal in the concrete. Only GPR was used inside the warehouse because the concrete floor is reinforced with rebar which would interfere with the magnetometer. GPR can distinguish objects and estimate depth of objects. The GPR found that the upper layer of the warehouse floor was built with wire mesh and the lower layer of the warehouse floor was built with rebar. EPA's geological engineering consultant declared that the investigation's findings are inconclusive. Mr. Schweizer indicated his opinion is that there are no drums present and that the community should not be concerned about buried drums. Mr. Schweizer indicated that he has placed the reports up on the CAG website and for those that do not have internet access he has placed copies of the report in the AMCO public records repository at the Oakland Public Library Main Branch.

- A community member asked why the AMCO public records repository is at the Main Branch library rather than the West Oakland Branch. Ms. Rosetti replied that the West Oakland Branch is no longer accepting public documents due to space restrictions. Mr. Calanog pointed out that the reports will also be available at the EPA community center.
- A community member asked what will be done with the concrete before development. Mr. Schweizer replied that the concrete will need to be removed but that removal and disposal of the concrete will not be driving the cost of cleanup or development. A community member expressed concern about funding for redevelopment. Ms. Rosetti noted that the AMCO site will not be suitable for redevelopment until after remediation is completed, which is expected to take a number of years. Ms. Caraway explained that the Feasibility Study will include an estimate for the time required to achieve site cleanup. This site is a complicated site that will need a combination of remedies because of the mixture of chemicals present, several of which can't be treated easily.

Ms. Caraway updated the CAG on the progress of the AMCO field investigation

- Ms. Caraway said that previously considered remedies had looked at soil treatment in-place so aboveground land usage for other purposes could occur. In-place and other approaches will be evaluated during the next feasibility study using information that has been gained during the ongoing field investigation. The EPA has a lot more knowledge about where contamination is present compared to what had been assumed previously. The EPA understands that the community is focused on property reuse, but before reuse can even be considered, a settlement needs to be reached with the property owners.
- Ms. Caraway related that the current sampling effort is not negatively impacting the schedule. Within the Superfund process, the feasibility study still needs to be completed. Last year the process for the AMCO site stopped at the National Remedy Review Board, when the Board requested that the project team better characterize site subsurface conditions (i.e., perform additional sampling and analyses). The first feasibility study calculations involved many assumptions about the extent of contamination. Following the soil characterization effort, the feasibility study will be revisited. The National Remedy Review Board will have another opportunity to review the feasibility study.
- A community member asked whether it was typical for a Superfund site investigation and cleanup to take two to three decades.
- Ms. Caraway replied, yes, and that there has been criticism about how long the process takes; however, two to three decades is in line with the time frame for the cleanup of other sites nationwide. Ms. Rosetti pointed out that legal settlements can significantly lengthen the process.
- Ms. Caraway described the progression of the ongoing subsurface soil investigation. Ms. Caraway related that the EPA is about one third of the way through the soil characterization

sampling activities. The field team has been able to refine their understanding of the subsurface lithologic conditions. An improved understanding regarding subsurface conditions will influence the remedial design. For many of the soil samples, the EPA is awaiting analytical results. There are a lot of data and the EPA is performing quality assurance and quality checks of the data and evaluating the data.

- Ms. Caraway related that the investigation is finding the expected contaminants: volatile organic compounds (VOCs) and semi-volatile organic compounds (SVOCs); and metals, PCBs, polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs), and organochlorine pesticides only detected in shallow soils. Fill and rubble have been encountered from one to ten feet below the ground surface (bgs). Generally, the highest concentrations of soil contamination have been found at depths of one to ten feet bgs. In some locations soil contamination has been found from one to twenty feet bgs, with reduced concentrations at lower depths. Ms. Caraway related that one boring completed last Friday (February 10th) appeared to have odors at 40 feet bgs, within a sand lense, with the upper portion of the borehole having been clean. The sands encountered are interesting.
- Ms. Rosetti asked when the Proposed Plan can be expected. Ms. Caraway replied that the plan will not be available sooner than a year from now because, in addition to the soil characterization, the EPA will be conducting a treatability study on samples to be collected as part of the soil characterization efforts. The objective of the treatability study will be to examine the effectiveness of a variety of remedial technologies given site-specific conditions.
- A community member asked whether the Proposed Plan will be completed in 2014. Ms. Caraway replied that she does not want to give a firm date because things may change; however, at this point the community should know that the site will receive funding for performing the remedial actions. It is just a question of when and how much funding that the EPA will provide. Ms. Caraway went on to say that the Proposed Plan will probably follow the results of the treatability study by a year. Ms. Caraway indicated the EPA will know more about the schedule after the soil characterization and the treatability study have been completed. Ms. Caraway noted that the soil characterization activities could find that the source area is smaller than initially believed. If limited in extent, it may be feasible to have the EPA's Emergency Response program come in and remove the source area immediately.

Ms. Caraway described the air monitoring taking place during the ongoing Soil Characterization Program

- Objectives of the air monitoring program:
 - Quantify VOC levels in air during drilling and sampling
 - Evaluate air quality for field workers, adjacent residents and the community, and EPA field trailer occupants
- Ms. Caraway related that the primary method of measurement involves the use of photoionization detectors (PIDs), consisting of handheld instruments that take manual readings and fixed location PIDs with data loggers. The PIDs with data loggers record the PID readings on an established frequency and field personnel download and evaluate the results. In addition, field personnel respond to readings from the hand-held PIDs in real time. Additional field methods are used for monitoring the concentration of vinyl chloride (VC), which is the primary contaminant driver of risk for field personnel. VC monitoring involves the use of the Drager Chip Measurement System, which is a handheld system and is chemical-specific. The Drager Chip System measures VC in parts per million by volume (ppmv).
- Ms. Caraway added that Summa canisters are also used to collect air samples over the 8-hour work period. The Summa canisters are analyzed at a laboratory to provide concentrations of specific VOCs. Ms. Caraway related that while the results from field instruments are available immediately, the Summa canister data are legally defensible data from which risk can be calculated. Ms. Caraway also pointed out that PIDs measure total VOCs and that detection limits on PIDs are higher.
- Surrounding air monitoring locations are upwind, downwind, and on the fence adjacent to the EPA trailer. Monitoring is also conducted at the drilling location near the borehole, and within the worker's breathing zone. When soil samples are collected; a portion of the soil is placed

in a sealable, plastic bag and the bag is then sealed. After waiting approximately 30 minutes a PID reading is taken from the headspace air inside the bag. Currently, results from the PID perimeter monitoring have shown that total VOCs have been below 0.5 ppm.

- A community member asked if the investigation has encountered water in the subsurface. Ms. Caraway responded yes.
- Ms. Caraway related that the initial boreholes for the soil characterization were located outside of the warehouse. The field crew encountered difficult drilling conditions, which resulted in the need to replace the original drilling outfit. The new driller started in the source area a week and a half ago (early February 2012). Ms. Caraway indicated that at the time of the CAG, 50 boreholes had been completed.
- Ms. Caraway referred to the figure in the presentation which showed air monitoring locations. Additionally, Ms. Caraway showed a slide to demonstrate soil headspace monitoring. At SC-019 (3 feet bgs), the maximum PID headspace monitoring results were 1,245 ppm. Boring SC-019 is located in the middle of the source area near the warehouse. The maximum VC detection in the same borehole at 7 to 10 feet bgs, was 2.76 ppm. The EPA is still waiting for the Summa canister analytical results for that work period.
- Ms. Caraway reviewed air quality action levels for workers. Under conditions of greater than 5 ppm total VOCs for 5 minutes, the workers are required to put on an air purifying respirator; above 10 ppm total VOCs for 5 minutes workers will stop work and upgrade protection based on a Certified Industrial Hygienist's (CIH) recommendation (probably would include a supplied air respirator). For VC above 0.5 ppm, workers upgrade to an air purifying respirator and above 10 ppm workers stop work and upgrade per CIH recommendations.
- Ms. Rosetti asked what happened at SC-019 when workers encountered the levels described? Ms. Caraway responded that workers had already been in respirators due to the likelihood of encountering VOCs in the source area. Workers were in Level C (air purifying respirators) for all Group 3 borings.
- During the boring at SC-019, the boring with the highest headspace detections, data for the perimeter VOC borings were as follows:
 - Upwind – 0.0 ppm total VOC and 0.0 ppm VC
 - Downwind – 0.0 ppm total VOC for most of the day; but a single 1.1 ppm reading at 12:57 PM and 0.0 ppm VC. Kent Baugh (ITSI Gilbane) pointed out that the single detection stood out from the rest of the readings and might have been associated with a vehicle in the vicinity of the monitoring instrument.
- Ms. Caraway noted that a few borings in the source area remain to be done and the highest detections have been associated with activities in that area. Ms. Caraway also pointed out that the activities in the surrounding area can contribute to high VOC readings, such as vehicles on the freeway and trucks heading to the port. Ms. Caraway indicated that the Summa results from the workspace monitoring will be more representative of the VOCs generated as a result of the investigation activities, rather than the perimeter monitoring. Mr. Baugh pointed out that Summa canisters are not being collected every day, but that the PID is in use every day. Ms. Caraway added that as the Summa canister results continue to be non-detect, the need to continue Summa canister sample collection will probably decrease. Summa canisters will be collected during source area investigations. Because of the high cost of the Summa canister sampling, if no detections are encountered, additional Summa monitoring will be cut back. Ms. Caraway went on to say that the investigation is progressing rapidly and may finish early in May 2012.
- A community member asked about groundwater sampling. Ms. Caraway replied that the current soil characterization is focused on only soil samples and that a groundwater sampling event is currently ongoing, including the recently installed wells. Based on the sands encountered during the soil characterization (because there isn't clay extending as deep as was originally believed), the EPA may consider putting deeper wells on the AMCO property in order to characterize the groundwater. It is possible that the EPA may choose to put 6 to 8 more wells onsite while the drillers are mobilized. There is the difficulty in determining the locations of any new wells due to all of the utilities located beneath 3rd Street and the

sidewalk. Ms. Caraway also pointed out that an adjacent sewer line [located under 3rd Street] could be impacting groundwater flow downgradient of the source area.

- A community member asked if the EPA would only be treating the contamination at the AMCO site. Ms. Caraway responded that under CERCLA the Superfund site is defined by the boundaries of the extent of contamination, which in this case includes the entire groundwater plume, which extends beyond the footprint of the AMCO property.
- A community member asked whether the levels of contaminants in groundwater outside of the AMCO site are a concern. Ms. Caraway responded that the level of concern depends on the use of the water (designated beneficial uses). Mr. Schweizer added that he would be able to answer the questions about the quality of the groundwater at the site when the 2011 Annual Groundwater Monitoring Report is available for review. Mr. Baugh indicated that the Groundwater Monitoring Report is currently undergoing a review and should be submitted to EPA sometime in March.. Mr. Baugh added that while California groundwater typically has a beneficial use of drinking water, as one nears the Bay, the dissolved solids (i.e., salts) make groundwater unsuitable for drinking water. Ms. Suer pointed out that as water nears the Bay, if the beneficial use is designated as 'Bay water' then regulatory levels can be more stringent.
- Ms. Caraway summarized that she is reviewing the data as we receive it from the lab and will be reviewing the treatability study work plan after it is submitted to EPA. In addition, the Treatability Study will be reviewed by EPA Office of Research and Development Staff and ORD technical subcontractors. The treatability study may start in May or June.
- Ms. Rosetti moved on to community issues. Ms. Rosetti noted that not many community members are in attendance. Ms. Rosetti asked when the CAG should meet next, considering that there will not be new data to share for a few months.
- A community member asked about inviting the Mayor to a CAG meeting. Ms. Rosetti replied that the Mayor receives information about all the CAG meetings but if the EPA were to specifically request her presence, she would want to make sure that there are people present to talk to her and specific issues ready to present to her. Ms. Rosetti indicated she would discuss an invitation to the Mayor with Brian Beveridge, the community Co-Chair.
- Ms. Caraway suggested that the CAG meet during the second week of May, after the block party in April. Ms. Rosetti indicated she would contact Mr. Beveridge to schedule the meeting and develop the agenda.

Next Meeting

- The next CAG meeting will be on Thursday, May 17, 2012, 6:30 to 8:30 PM, at the Mandela Parkway Apartments Community Room.